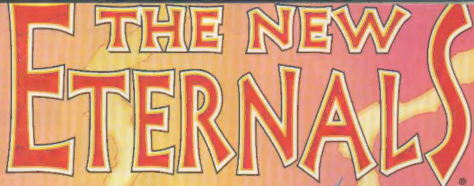
MARVEL COMICS



APOCALYPSE NOW

#1

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IN THE BEGINNING WERE THE FORMLESS WASTELANDS...

...THE VASTNESS OF SPACE.

AGES AND AGES UNTOLD...

BUT THE DAY CAME...

...WHEN THE DRY LANDS WERE CREATED...

...AND THE WINDSWEPT BASINS OF WATER TEEMED WITH AN ABUNDANCE OF LIVING CREATURES.

EARTH LET BIRDS FLY BENEATH THE DOME OF ITS SKIES...

...AND BROUGHT FORTH ALL THE WILD ANIMALS-- THE CREATURES THAT CRAWL ON THE GROUND AND THE BEASTS OF THE FIELD.

BUT THERE WAS ONE AMONG THESE BEASTS THAT HAD **DOMINION** OVER THE FISH OF THE SEA AND THE BIRDS OF THE AIR--

--ONE AMONG THESE BEASTS--

--WHO WOULD BE THE CHOSEN OF THE GODS!

STAN LEE PRESENTS
THE NEW ETERNALS

APOCALYPSE NOW

THE DESTINY OF MAN'S PRIMITIVE FOREBEARS WOULD BE FOREVER CHANGED BY THE INSTRUMENTATION OF THE **FIRST HOST** OF HEAVENLY **CELESTIALS**--

--GIVING RISE TO THE DAWN OF A **NEW AGE**--

--NOT ONLY OF MAN-- BUT ALSO HIS **BRETHREN RACES**--

--THE **ETERNALS**-- AND THE **DEVIANTS**--

--TWO **GENETICALLY MANIPULATED** OFF-SHOOTS OF HUMANITY.

THE ETERNALS, THEMSELVES A GOD-LIKE BREED, FEW IN NUMBER AND IMMUNE TO THE RAVAGES OF AGE, DISEASE AND DEATH, CHOSE TO SPEND THEIR LIVES APART FROM EARTH'S OTHER INHABITANTS--

--IN THE **SOLITUDE** OF THEIR SECLUDED CITY IN THE MOUNTAINTOPS.

THEY PROBED THE **UNIVERSE** THROUGH THE POWER OF THEIR **MINDS** AND DEVELOPED **ABILITIES** WHICH FAR **SURPASSED** THOSE OF ALL OTHER LIFE ON EARTH.

THEY WERE REGARDED WITH **AWE** AND **FEAR**.

THE MYTHS OF MAN ARE FILLED WITH **GLORIES** OF ITS ENCOUNTERS WITH THESE **MAGNIFICENT BEINGS**--

--AS WELL AS THE TERRORS INSPIRED BY MAN'S CLASHES WITH THE **STRUCTURALLY UNSTABLE** DEVIANTS-- **MONSTROUS** SPECIMENS, CONSTANTLY WAGING **WAR**--

--THEIR MORE PRIMITIVE HUMAN BROTHERS FORCED INTO SUBJUGATION--

--EMPIRES BUILT UPON THEIR **SWEAT** AND **LABOR**.

UNTIL, WITH THE BLINK OF AN EYE, A **SECOND HOST** OF CELESTIALS FROM THE STARS ERADICATED THE EMPIRE OF THE DEVIANTS--

--THEIR RACE ALL BUT **DESTROYED** AND THE SECRETS OF **MILLENNIA** LOST TO THEM.

THE ENTIRE CONTINENT OF **LEMURIA** UPON WHICH THEY LIVED--

KARL BOLLERS & MIKE HIGGINS
STORY

JOE BENNETT & SCOTT HANNA
ART

JOHN KALISZ & BENCHMARK
COLORS & LETTERS

RALPH MACCHIO
EDITOR

BOB HARRAS
CHIEF

INSPIRED BY THE WORKS OF
JACK "KING" KIRBY

--SANK ENTIRELY BENEATH THE MIGHTY SEAS.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN WE'RE *OFF COURSE,* ENSIGN?

JUST THAT, SIR...AND WE'VE COMPLETELY LOST *SONAR!*

HELM-- FULL *STOP!* PULL RIGHT RUDDER!

TRYING, SIR, BUT WE'VE GOT A *FAILURE* IN HYDRAULICS!

THE BLADES AREN'T RESPONDING!

WHAT'S OUR *DEPTH?*

1200 FEET, SIR-- BUT WE'RE STILL GOING *DOWN!*

SIR, WE HAVE PROXIMITY WARNING LIGHTS. THERE... THERE SEEMS TO BE SOMETHING OUT THERE. STRAIGHT AHEAD OF US--

WHAT'RE YOU *TALKING* ABOUT? I DON'T SEE--

--ANYTHING--!

HOLY--

WHAT IN *BLAZES* IS *THAT?!?!*

LOOKS LIKE... BUILDINGS, SIR-- SOME SORT OF... *CITY--* BUT IT JUST APPEARED OUT OF NOWHERE!

SOME SORT OF DECLOAKING DEVICE, NO DOUBT!

CAN YOU PLOT AN EVASIVE COURSE?

NEW ETERNALS™: APOCALYPSE NOW, Vol. 1, No. 1, February, 2000.

NO GOOD, SIR-- CONTROLS STILL WON'T RESPOND!

KRRNNNKT

ALL STATIONS-- RED ALERT! I REPEAT-- *RED ALERT!*

SIR-- THE *MISSILES!*

ARMING NUCLEAR WARHEADS

LAUNCHING IN T-MINUS 10 SECONDS AND COUNTING...

"THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO NOW. IT'S *TOO LATE!*"

FWOOOSH


IN THE CITY BELOW...
HEAR ME, FAITHFUL BRETHREN.
WE LISTEN AND OBEY, PRIEST-LORD GHAUR!
YOUR EMINENCE IS WITHOUT EQUAL!
WHILE THE HUMAN CITIES THRIVE UPON THE SURFACE WORLD, WE HAVE BEEN FORCED TO SPEND OUR DAYS AMIDST THE MURK AND SLIME OF THIS LOST REPUBLIC!
NO LONGER! THE TIME HAS COME FOR THE DEVIANTS TO ONCE MORE ESTABLISH DOMINION OVER THE EARTH-- ENSLAVE HUMANKIND, AND RESTORE OUR BREED TO ITS FORMER GLORY!
HOW FORTUNATE THAT WE ALL DON'T SHARE YOUR BARBARISTIC VIEWS, GHAUR! YOUR WORDS ARE AS UNMOVING AS THE GOLDEN STATUE NOW HOUSING YOUR LIVING CONSCIOUSNESS!
SILENCE, KARKAS-- I WILL BROOK NO INTERFERENCE FROM YOU OR THIS PALTRY BAND OF REBEL INTERLOPERS!
STAND DOWN, GHAUR! YOURS IS THE ROAD TO DESTRUCTION AND THERE ARE THOSE AMONG THE DEVIANTS WHO CHOOSE ANOTHER WAY!
WE WILL SEE THAT THIS MADNESS AND YOUR DAYS OF RULE ARE ENDED--
--EVEN IF IT MEANS WE PERISH IN THE ATTEMPT!
SO BE IT, RANSAK!
DESTROY THEM!
FWAK
SHOOM

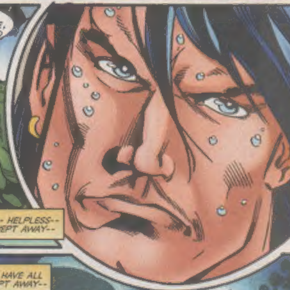

WHAT?! THE SACRED TEMPLE-- UNDER ATTACK!
YOU WOULD UNLEASH DESTRUCTIVE FORCES OF SUCH MAGNITUDE AGAINST YOUR OWN-- IN DEFENSE OF HUMANKIND?!
FOOLS!


GHAUR IS MISTAKEN! OUR BAND IS NOT BEHIND THIS NEW ASSAULT!
HOLD ON, FRIEND KARKAS--
--AND WHEN THE WORST HAS PASSED-- IF WE ARE ABLE TO SURVIVE-- WE'LL REGROUP BACK AT THE REBEL BASE.


THOUGH YOU HAVE BESTED ME IN COMBAT, RANSAK, YOU KNOW WELL THAT IT WILL TAKE MORE THAN A LITTLE SEA WATER TO PUT AN END TO MY DAYS!


HUMANS?
BUT WHAT CAUSED THIS? WHAT IS HAPPENING?


I KNOW NOT, KARKAS, BUT OF THIS I AM CERTAIN: NO MATTER MY FATE, FOREVER SHALL YOU BE COUNTED AMONG--
RANSAK! RANS-


HE WATCHES-- SILENT-- HELPLESS-- AS HIS COMRADE IS SWEPT AWAY--


AS THEY HAVE ALL BEEN SWEPT AWAY--





BUT THERE ARE THOSE WHO **ENDURE** DESPITE THE GREATEST OF ODDS--

--MEMORIES THAT LIVE ON--

B-DIP

B-DIP

--VOICES FROM THE *PAST*.



A SHORT TIME LATER, JUST ACROSS THE BAY FROM SAN FRANCISCO--

--IN A STUDENT LECTURE HALL AT U.C.BERKELEY...

MANKIND CAN DENY IT NO LONGER. THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT THERE ARE MUTANTS LIVING AMONG US.

AND PERHAPS THE MOST NOTORIOUS OF THE SO-CALLED HOMO-SUPERIOR IS MAGNETO. THOUGH MANY CONSIDER HIM TO BE A TERRORIST...

...HE HAS RECENTLY BEEN NAMED MONARCH OF GENOSHA, A SMALL ISLAND NATION OFF THE EAST COAST OF AFRICA...

THE U.N. MUST'VE BEEN, LIKE, ON SERIOUS DRUGS WHEN THEY MADE THAT MOVE, EH, PROFESSOR KING!

MISS KING, HOW DO WE KNOW IF THERE ARE ANY OF THEM IN THIS HALL RIGHT NOW?

WHAT DO WE DO IF THERE ARE? I'M AFRAID OF THEM!

THAT DUDE IS JUST A SADDAM HUSSEIN IN SPANDEX! EVERYBODY KNOWS MUTANTS ARE BAD NEWS!

BUT ISN'T THAT LIKE BLAMING AN ENTIRE GROUP FOR THE ACTIONS OF A SINGLE PERSON?

I THINK YOU RAISE AN INTERESTING POINT. JUST BECAUSE THESE RARE INDIVIDUALS ARE BORN WITH ADVANCED POWERS AND ABILITIES, WHY IS THERE ANY REASON TO ASSUME THAT THEY AUTOMATICALLY EMBODY SOME SORT OF THREAT?

PERHAPS WHAT THEY ACTUALLY REPRESENT IS THE NEXT LEVEL IN HUMAN EVOLUTION.

WHAT'S UP WITH THAT? HUMANS AREN'T GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU?

THAT'S DISGUSTING!

HEY, TEACH... YOU SOME KIND O' FREAKIN' MUTIE LOVER?

OR MAYBE SHE IS A MUTANT!

ALL RIGHT, "GENTLEMEN"-- ENOUGH OF THAT!

YOU'LL EITHER HAVE TO CONTROL YOURSELVES...

"...OR TAKE IT OUTSIDE."

DOESN'T MAKE MUCH DIFFERENCE WHAT MILLENNIUM IT IS. SOME THINGS NEVER SEEM TO CHANGE.

AFTER ALL THIS TIME, MANKIND IS STILL SO UNWILLING TO EMBRACE ANYTHING THAT'S DIFFERE-- UH-OH.

LOOKS LIKE SOME GUYS JUST DO'T KNOW WHEN TO QUIT.

HEY, TEACH! REMEMBER HOW YOU TOLD US TO TAKE IT OUTSIDE? WELL...

WELL HERE WE ARE... JUST LIKE YOU WANTED...

...AN' WE THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE UP FOR A LITTLE EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY. WE SURE ARE.

NOBODY ELSE AROUND-- NO COPS, NO SECURITY, NOT EVEN ONE O' YOUR PRECIOUS MUTIES. JUST US--

--AND WE'RE GONNA TAKE WHAT WE WANT.

REALLY...? WELL, THEN--

--COME AND *GET* IT!

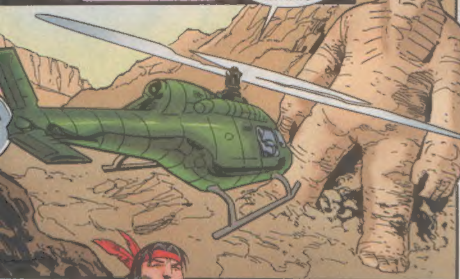









NEW MEXICO...


PRETTY *IMPRESSIVE*, MISSUS DEVEREAUX! HOW LONG'D IT TAKE 'IM TO *SCULPT* THAT THING ANYWAY?


OH, YOU'D BE SURPRISED HOW FAST MY *FATHER* WORKS, MAX.
WAITAMINNIT-- I KNEW MISTER *HAWK* WAS YOUR BIGGEST CLIENT, BUT YOU NEVER TOLD ME HE WAS YOUR DAD, TOO!
YOU NEVER *ASKED*...
NO DISRESPECT, MISSUS D...


"...BUT HE DOESN'T LOOK *OLD* ENOUGH TO--"


WHOA!!
HANG ON, MISSUS D-- WE'RE CAUGHT UP IN SOME WICKED *TURBULENCE!* NEVER SEEN IT GET SO BAD SO FAST!




CAN'T *SEE* A THING--
--LOSING CONTROL--!



"THE SCULPTURE-- IT'S ALIVE, MISSUS D!"

SOMEHOW, HAWK IS *RESPONSIBLE*, ISN'T HE?!

DON'T BE RIDICULOUS, MAX!

RIS-- ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!

DON'T WORRY, DADDY-- WE'RE A LITTLE SHAKEN UP IN HERE-- BUT NONE THE WORSE FOR THE WEAR.

MY APOLOGIES, RIS, BUT YOUR MEETING WITH THOMAS HAWK WILL HAVE TO WAIT. COYOTE IS BEING CALLED TO ATTEND TO BUSINESS--

--ELSEWHERE!

GOOD. I'M DETECTING A *PRIMAL DISTURBANCE* IN NATURE. I KNOW THERE IS A *CONNECTION* BETWEEN IT

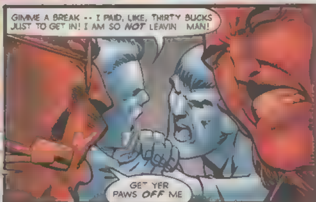
AND THE *INTENSE WIND* THAT SUDDENLY BLEW IN FROM THE *PACIFIC*.

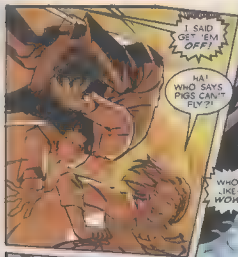
AND YOU SAY THAT GUY WAS YOUR FATHER, HUNH, MISSUS D?


NEW YORK
THE CLUB SCENE


IS IT A CRIME TO ASK A *HOTTIE* TO DANCE PUNK?
WHEN SHE'S *MY* HOTTIE, FAT-HEAD!
WELL MAYBE THE BABE CAN DO *BETTER*, LOSER

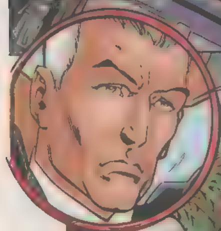

WE'VE GOT A PROBLEM ON THE DANCE FLOOR
ALL RIGHT "LADIES"-- PARTY'S OVER YOU'RE BOTH OUTTA HERE!


GIMME A BREAK -- I PAID, LIKE, THIRTY BUCKS JUST TO GET IN! I AM SO *NOT* LEAVIN' MAN!
GET YER PAWS *OFF* ME


I SAID GET 'EM OFF!
HA! WHO SAYS PIGS CAN'T FLY?!
WHOA LIKE-- WOW!
HAVEN'T FELT ANYTHING LIKE THAT IN A LONG TIME!
IT'S THEM--
--AND THEY WANT ME
--THE REAL ME!
SO... GUESS IT'S TIME FOR AURELLE TO TURN ON A LITTLE LOVELIGHT
LET IT SHINE-- SHINE-- SHINE!
LOOK!! WHAT IS IT?!
WHATEVER IT IS IT'S BEAUTIFUL!
AWESOME!!
I NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT
ME NEITHER
BUMMER
JUST WHEN IT LOOKED LIKE THINGS MIGHT TURN OUT TO BE FUN--
--DUTY CALLS!


BUT FOR SOME THE JOB IS JUST ABOUT TO BEGIN
AGENT FINDLAY ... ARRIVED WITH *AGENT SYKES--*
--AND THAT HE IS ALREADY UP THERE NEGOTIATING FOR THE RELEASE OF THE *HOSTAGES* IN THE CN TOWER?


ALL RIGHT STAND BACK AND GIVE THE LADY A BIT OF ROOM TO BREATHE, EH?
--BUT THE PAPARAZZO'S RIGHT
--RONNIE IS UP THERE-AND IT'S BEEN TOO DARNED LONG


WHY NOT PUT DOWN THE *SEMI-AUTOMATIC* SO WE CAN DISCUSS THIS--LIKE *INTELLECTUALS,* HAROLD?
QUIT TALKIN' TO ME LIKE WE'RE *FRIENDS!* WE'RE *NOT* FRIENDS!!
NO HAROLD BUT WE'RE TWO OF A KIND IT OBVIOUSLY TOOK A GENEROUS AMOUNT OF *BRAINPOWER* FOR YOU TO SEIZE THIS EDIFICE
THIS IS A MEETING OF THE *MINDS* THESE PEOPLE HAVE NO PLACE HERE
THIS IS BETWEEN *YOU* AND *ME* NOW LET THEM GO
THEY AIN'T GOIN NOWHERE--
BUT YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT ONE THING-- THIS IS BETWEEN THE TWO OF *US*--AND I'M GONNA BLOW YOU AWAY!
NOTHIN'S GONNA *STOP* ME!
IN THAT CASE *MORON--*


AAARGHH!!
BRATTA BRATTA
BLAM BLAM
IT'S ALL RIGHT FOLKS-
IT ISN'T REALLY OVER IS IT?
THE DANGER IS AVERTED IN ONE LOCALE--
--BUT IT BEGINS ANEW IN SOME OTHER PLACE
--THIS LITTLE DRAMA'S OVER
OH, THANK YOU AGENT SYKES!
THANK YOU SO MUCH
STILL, I HAVE A DUTY TO THEM-- AND WILL AN SUMMONS--
--WHATEVER THE REASON THEY NOW BECKON

BULLPEN BULLETINS

AVAILABLE DECEMBER 22ND

AVENGERS: DOMINATION FACTOR #4

Betrayed by one of their own the Avengers and the Fantastic Four are even more hard pressed to stop our mystery villain and save the world! But seeds planted in the past bear odd fruit, offering our heroes one slim hope for victory! By JERRY ORDWAY and JERRY ORDWAY!

DEADPOOL #37

Deadpool vs... Thor?! Manipulated by the Asgardian trickster known as Loki, Wade Wilson heads into the biggest battle of his life! It's the Merc-With-The-Mouth against the God of Thunder! By CHRISTOPHER PRIEST and PACO DIAZ!

EARTH X #11½

On Earth it's all of the surviving heroes vs the Skull! On the moon the knowledge of humanity's purpose leads to an all-out battle between Black Bolt and the Celestials! By J.M. KRUEGER and JOHN PAUL LEON

GAMBIT #13

New York, 1891. A place of corruption. And now, a place where Gambit finds himself... side-by-side with his father! It's a race to find the man called Sinister, as the secrets of the Thieves Guild and the Clan LeBeau are revealed! By FABIAN NICIEZA and STEVE SKROCE!

WARLOCK #6

An old friend returns as the X-Men's Shadowcat joins Warlock and company just in time to help the group combat a little problem called Bastion! The mutant hater is back, and stronger than ever thanks to some new body parts from... we're not telling! By LOUISE SIMONSON and PASCUAL FERRY!

WEBSPINNERS: TALES OF SPIDER-MAN

Carnage comes a'callin' in this story set in current continuity! Trapped in the dreaded Negative Zone, Spider-Man fights on the side of the insurrectionists against the overwhelming power of the monstrous Blastaar! By HOWARD MACKIE and GRAHAM NOLAN!

X-MEN: CHILDREN OF THE ATOM #4

Scott Summers enters the strange world of the Xavier School for Gifted Youngsters. Bobby Drake realizes that Professor X may be his last, best hope for control of his burgeoning abilities, and Jean Grey makes a life-changing decision! By JOE CASEY and STEVE RUDE!

STAN'S SOAPBOX

Hi, Heroes!

You never know what some people wonder about. Here's a case in point. We recently received a letter from Columbus, Ohio which was signed "the Randy Hampton-unit" (whatever that means) and which plaintively begs to inquire:

"I've often wondered, when you created the Uncanny X-Men, of all the X-Men, who was the very first character you created for the team?"

I've never been famous for my memory and nine times out of ten I wouldn't be able to answer such a question... but luckily this is the tenth time! I actually do remember that it all started with Professor Xavier... I wanted Marvel to have a new team of heroes and the first thing I tried to figure out was -- who'd be the leader? It was the same with the Fantastic Four. First I had to dream up the guy who got 'em all together, namely their leader, Reed Richards. Getting back to the X-Men, as far as I knew there were no telepathic heroes at that time, so I decided to make Prof. X a telepath. Then I had to figure out how he gained that power in the first place. The easiest explanation was that he was born with it — ergo, he was a mutant. Well, the rest was easy. All I hadda do was come up with a bunch of additional mutants... and see to it that Xavier would use his telepathic power to find them and recruit them. But whatever you do, don't tell our competitors how easy it is -- we don't want everyone inventing new mutant teams, right?

No detail is too small to escape the notice of Zack Hall of Clearwater, KS who asks:

"How and by whom is it decided which characters will have their picture in the upper left hand corner of every one of your comicbook covers?"

Well, Zack, when I was heading the Bullpen I made those decisions. So I'm gonna take a wild stab at it and guess that it's now editor in chief Bob Harras who has that weighty responsibility on his broad and bony shoulders. He probably also consults with the entire creative staff as well as his family and friends and local astrologers, psychics and palm readers. After all, such momentous decisions must never be taken lightly!

Matt Pericht of Cape Coral, FL can criticize movies for me any time. Here's why:

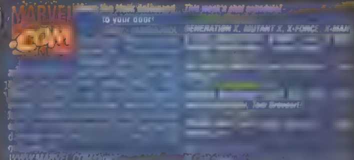
"I thought you were cool in 'Mall Rats.' Is it true what you said in the movie when you mentioned that each character you create represents a part of you? And when you met the writer/director Kevin Smith, what did you think of him?"

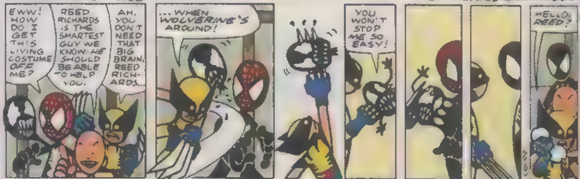
At first I thought he was a great guy, but when I realized that he was just gonna give me a supporting role instead of making me the star, I naturally changed my mind. As for what I said in the movie... I was just reading the lines that Kevin wrote, although I guess they were actually pretty perceptive because I think that every writer does put a little of himself into every character he writes. Maybe that's why I made our Thor so godlike and Mr. Fantastic so smart and Daredevil so fearless! Hey, they represent me, right?

And you can represent yourself by e-mailing me at *stanzfanz@aol.com* or writing to *Soapbox, Marvel, 387 Park Av. S., NY, NY 10016*. Now I'll never be able to escape you!

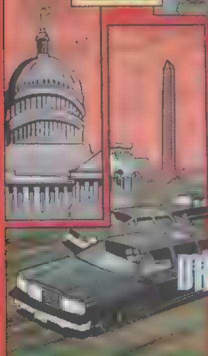
Excelsior!

Stan Lee





Design by Richard Starkings and COMICRAFT/EW


MORNING


DREET DREET
YES-
--I'M LOOKING AT THE REPORT RIGHT NOW




--ALL WE KNOW IS THAT THERE WAS SOME SORT OF DISTURBANCE IN THE DEPTHS OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN---THE SPECIFIC NATURE OF WHICH HAS NOT YET BEEN REVEALED
THIS
HAS LED TO A SHUTDOWN OF ALL INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL BY BOTH AIR AND SEA
LANES COVERING A RADIUS OF SEVERAL HUNDRED MILES HAVE BEEN RESTRICTED--AND ALL INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS HEADED EAST HAVE BEEN CANCELED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE
YES.
THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE UNITED STATES, RUSSIA, CHINA AND JAPAN ARE ONLY WILLING TO SAY THAT THE SITUATION IS "UNDER CLOSE INVESTIGATION"
I'LL SEE YOU AT

IN THIRTY

THERE IT IS, GENTLEMEN THE *HORRIBLE TRUTH*

YOU'VE ALL
THE SALVAGE OF THE U S S DARING AND HER NUCLEAR PAYLOAD

NOW OBSERVE ONSCREEN IS BUT THE MEREST *GLIMPSE* INTO WHAT THE DIVING CREWS DISCOVERED AMIDST THAT RECOVERY OPERATION

WHAT ON EARTH IS IT CAMPION?

NOT *ON* EARTH, KARIM-- *UNDER* EARTH A MONSTROUS, HIDDEN RACE OF CREATURES LIVING IN A LOST CITY BENEATH THE PACIFIC BASIN HEADY STUFF

OF COURSE, OUR OPERATIVES HAVE
STORIES THAT SHOULD SATISFY THE *GENERAL POPULACE-- WORLD LEADERS* INCLUDED

THE MATTER BEFORE US IS ACTUALLY QUITE SIMPLE WE MUST PREVENT THE WORLD FROM EVER LEARNING OF THE *EXISTENCE* OF THESE *GENETIC HORRORS*

THE *ANTI-MUTANT HYSTERIA* GRIPPING THIS PLANET WOULD SEEM NSIGNIFICANT COMPARED WITH THE *WIDESPREAD PANIC* THAT WOULD SURELY ENSUE

THE ERA OF *MAN'S DOMINANCE* ON THE PLANET EARTH FINALLY DRAWS TO A CLOSE--

--BUT THERE S ... DETERMINED ... FINAL HOURS BEFORE THE *END TIMES* ARE UPON US

LITTLE DO THEY REALIZE THE *FORCES* THEY ARE DEALING W TH-- THE FORCES I AM DEALING WITH!

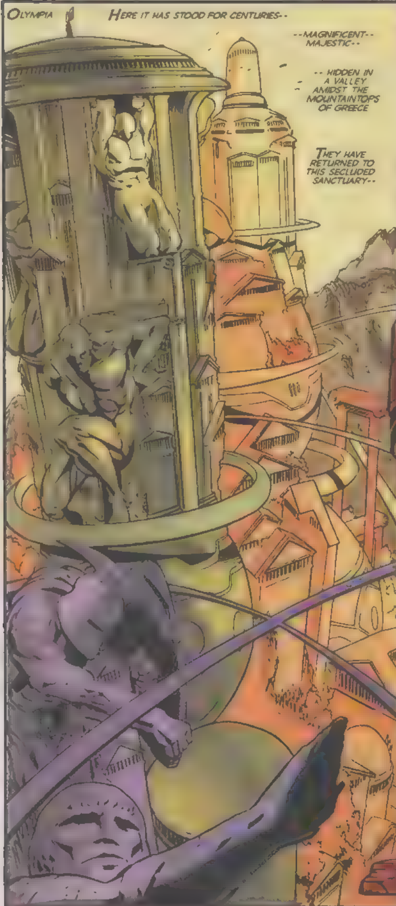
IT WAS MERE *CHILD'S PLAY* FOR ME TO TAKE CONTRO OF THOSE NUCLEAR WARHEADS--

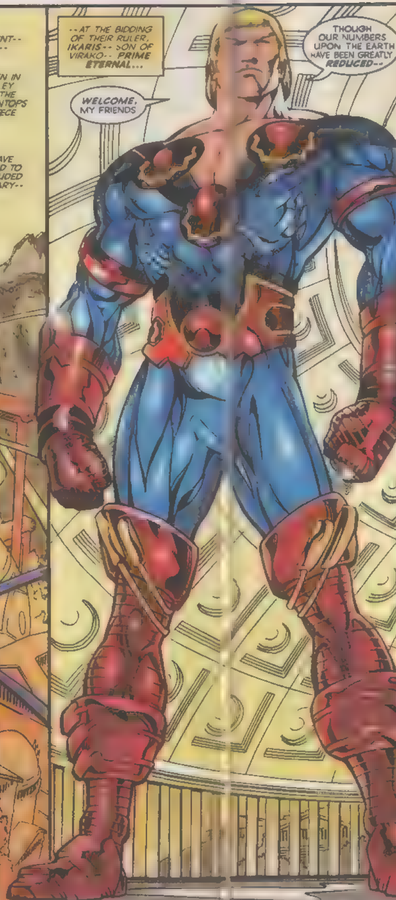
--ONCE AGAIN PLANTING THE SEED OF *WAR* BETWEEN DEV ANT AND HUMAN-- A SEED THAT HAS LAIN DORMANT FOR AGES

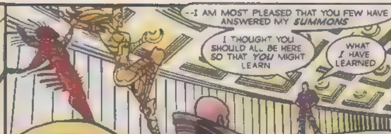
WHAT BETTER WAY TO DISCOVER WHO IS *WORTHY* TO *INHERIT* THE EARTH?

LET THEM FIGHT AMONGST *THEMSELVES*.

WHEN IT IS OVER-- IF ANY *SURVIVE*-- THEY WILL BEAR *WITNESS* TO THE DAWN OF A BOLD NEW ERA-- *THE AGE OF APOCALYPSE!*

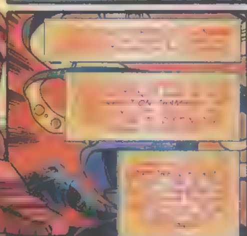

OLYMPIA
HERE IT HAS STOOD FOR CENTURIES--
--MAGNIFICENT--MAJESTIC--
--HIDDEN IN A VALLEY AMIDST THE MOUNTAINTOPS OF GREECE
THEY HAVE RETURNED TO THIS SECLUDED SANCTUARY--


--AT THE BIDDING OF THEIR RULER, IKARIS-- SON OF VIRAKO-- PRIME ETERNAL...
WELCOME, MY FRIENDS
THOUGH OUR NUMBERS UPON THE EARTH HAVE BEEN GREATLY REDUCED--


--I AM MOST PLEASED THAT YOU FEW HAVE ANSWERED MY SUMMONS
I THOUGHT YOU SHOULD ALL BE HERE SO THAT YOU MIGHT LEARN
WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

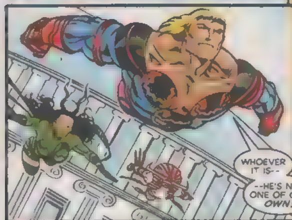

EVEN AS I ADDRESS THOSE OF YOU HERE ASSEMBLED-- OUR MOST VALUED SCIENTISTS LABOR INTENSELY--
--IN AN ATTEMPT TO SOLVE A RIDDLE--
--WHOSE ANSWERS MAY WELL HAVE A PROFOUND EFFECT ON THE WAY WE UNDERSTAND OUR VERY EXISTENCE


SOMETHING HAS HAPPENED-- SOMETHING AFFECTING THE ATMOSPHERE THAT SURROUNDS THE
HIS INITIAL FINDINGS WERE


ZURAS BE PRAISED!
DO-- DO YOU KNOW WHO--?


I'D BE HAPPY JUST TO KNOW WHAT THAT *SOUND* WAS!

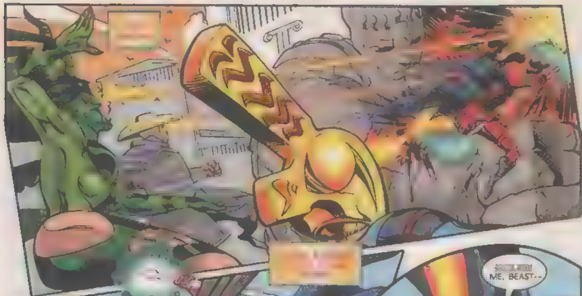

NEVER DID CARE MUCH FOR *PARTY CRASHERS!*


WHOEVER IT IS--
--HE'S NOT ONE OF OUR *OWN!*




AND HE CERTAINLY DOESN'T SEEM TO BE PARTICULARLY
-FRIENDLY


UMMF!







ME, BEAST--
I SAID RELEASE ME'





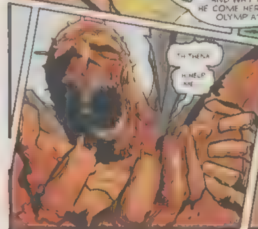
RELAX, PSYKOS THOSE BLASTS ARE PRETTY POWERFUL--
AND M SSING YOUR TARGE COMP ETELY
REGARDLESS HANDS AREN PROBLEM
IT'S H S STAFF
BUT HOW MUCH TROUBLE CAN THAT BE, AFTER I'VE TURNED T TO DUST?


THINK YOU CAN TAKE IT FROM HERE, MIND MANIPULATOR?
I NEVER ASKED FOR YOUR HELP, SERS--
--AND I NEVER NEEDED IT!


INEVITABLY I WOULD HAVE TENDED TO THE SITUATION IN MY OWN FASHION
MAYBE THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM, PSYK-- YOU'VE GOT NO SENSE OF STYLE


WHO IS THIS PITIFUL CREATURE--
AND WHY HAS HE COME HERE TO OLYMPIA?


ALL RIGHT, STRANGER, WE CAN DO THIS THE EASY WAY-- OR THE HARD WAY
WHICH SHALL IT BE?
THAT'S WHAT I INTEND TO FIND OUT!


H-HELP ME



YOU EXPECT US TO *BELIEVE* ALL THIS?

IT'S A FOOL WHO DOESN'T BELIEVE THE *TRUTH* WHEN IT'S RIGHT BEFORE HIS EYES

YOU MEAN TO SAY YOU PULLED THAT THING UP-- FROM UNDER THE PACIFIC OCEAN?

INDEED, GENTLEMEN AND AS IT HAS BEEN T[illegible] ALL THE AGES THESE ARE THE *SPOILS OF WAR*

I'M AFRAID MR CAMPION IS TELLING YOU THE *TRUTH*, MEN

EVEN NOW A STATE OF *WAR* EXISTS BETWEEN THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH

--AND THE *NORDES* OF THESE DEVILISH FREAKS

IT MAY BE A *SILENT* WAR THAT'S BEING WAGED

BUT IT DEFINITELY QUALIFIES AS ONE OF THE BLOODIEST IN HISTORY

LOOK HOW MANY DIED JUST TRYING TO STOP US FROM REMOVING THE GOLDEN STATUE

BUT *WHY*, SIR?

MAYBE IT WAS JUST A CULTURAL ARTIFACT OF SOME KIND-- OR MAYBE THEY PROTECTED IT LIKE A COLONY OF ANTS OR BEES PROTECTS ITS QUEEN

I DON'T KNOW AND FRANKLY I DON'T *CARE*

THESE CREATURES DON'T *THINK* LIKE US THEY DON'T *ACT* LIKE US

WHEN ALL IS SAID AND DONE WE HAVE ABSOLUTELY *NOTHING* IN COMMON WITH THESE MONSTERS FROM THE [illegible]

THAT NEED CONCERN US-- IS THEIR *EXTERMINATION!*"

WE MUST EXERCISE EXTREME CAUTION

EVEN WEARING THESE SPECIAL *CONTAINMENT SUITS*--

--AND THAT THING IN A *CRYOGENIC FREEZE*--

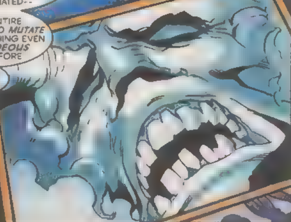
--THERE IS NO TELLING WHAT WE ARE *EXPOSING* OURSELVES TO

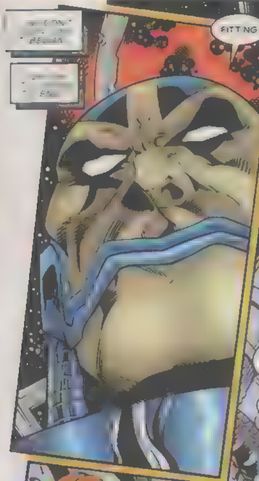
THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS, UNTIL A FEW *DAYS* AGO, THIS CREATURE ONLY BORE A PASSING RESEMBLANCE TO THE *MONSTROSITY* YOU NOW SEE BEFORE YOU

THE MOLECULAR STRUCTURE OF THIS BIZARRE RACE SEEMS TO BE, BY ITS VERY NATURE, *UNSTABLE*. WHEN THE U.S.S. DARING'S NUCLEAR STOCKPILE WAS DETONATED--

--THE ENTIRE RACE BEGAN TO *MUTATE* INTO SOMETHING EVEN *MORE HIDEOUS* THAN BEFORE

THE TROUBLE'S GENTLEMEN



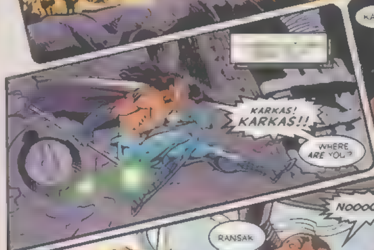


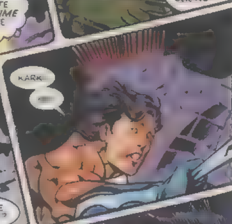
FITTING
EVER HAS IT BEEN MY *TASK* TO CULL THE *STRONG* FROM THE WEAK--
--AND TO WITNESS THE *MYRIAD PERMUTATIONS* THAT EARTH'S LIFEFORMS MAY UNDERGO--
BUT NEVER HAVE EVEN *I* SEEN SOMETHING LIKE THIS
THE ENTIRE
UPSTAGED--
--*CHAOTIC TRANSMUTATIONS* ON GENETIC AND CELLULAR LEVELS
MATTERS THAT MUST BE FULLY UNDERSTOOD IN THE *BRIEF* AMOUNT OF TIME THAT STILL REMAINS
MATTERS TRULY *BEYOND* THE COMPREHENSION OF EARTH'S PRIMITIVE INHABITANTS
MATTERS MORE RIGHTLY TO BE PONDERED--

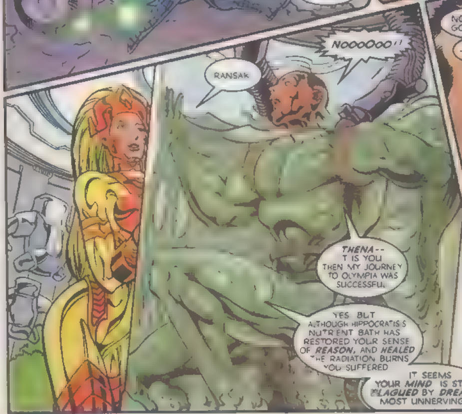

COMMENCING CARBOMOLECULAR RECONFIGURATION SOVEREIGN
EXCELLENT PHASTOS
SO IKE, LONG TIME NO HEAR FROM
NEARLY TWO HUNDRED YEARS, AURELLE
MAYBE NOT NEARLY AS LONG AS IT'S BEEN FOR THIS GUY, HUH?
I WONDER WHO IT COULD BE?
LOOK THE ENERGIES ARE UNDERGOING STRUCTURAL INTEGRATION--
--COALESCING INTO-
FATHER

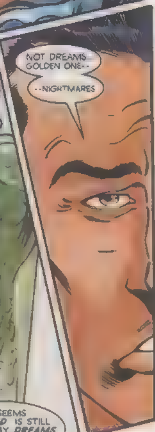

THERE HE IS-- DON'T LET HIM ESCAPE! **SHOOT** HIM!
WHADDAYA THINK I'M **TRYIN** TO DO?! HE'S TOO FREAKIN' **FAST**-- NO WAY HE'S HUMAN!
FOOLS-- THEY'RE FORTUNATE I'VE **NO TIME** TO WASTE STILL

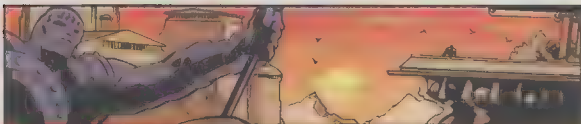

THEY MUST BE DEALT WITH
HE **BLASTED** OUT THE ENTIRE CEILING--


KARKAS! KARKAS!!
WHERE **ARE** YOU?


KARK

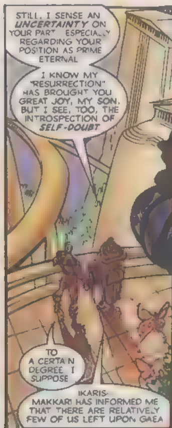

NOOOOOO!!
RANSAK
THENA-- IT IS YOU THEN MY JOURNEY TO OLYMPIA WAS SUCCESSFUL
YES BUT ALTHOUGH HIPPOCRATIS'S NUTRIENT BATH HAS RESTORED YOUR SENSE OF **REASON**, AND **HEALED** THE RADIATION BURNS YOU SUFFERED
IT SEEMS YOUR **MIND** IS STILL **PLAGUED** BY **DREAMS** MOST UNNERVING

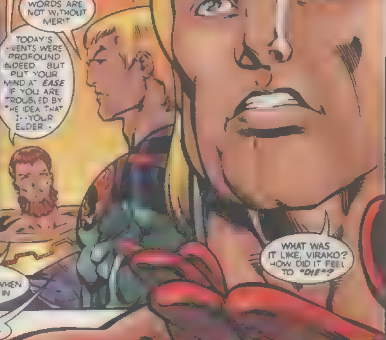

NOT DREAMS GOLDEN ONE--
--NIGHTMARES



MY SON
SIRE


YOU RETAIN THE *YOUTHFUL* APPEARANCE I RECALL FROM AGES PAST BUT YOUR RAIMENT DIFFERS
AND YOUR COUNTENANCE'S CHANGED GROWN MORE *SULLEN*
YOU WEAR THE FAMILIAR FACE OF *LEADERSHIP*


STILL, I SENSE AN UNCERTAINTY ON YOUR PART ESPECIALLY REGARDING YOUR POSITION AS PRIME ETERNAL
I KNOW MY "RESURRECTION" HAS BROUGHT YOU GREAT JOY, MY SON, BUT I SEE, TOO, THE INTROSPECTION OF SELF-DOUBT
TO A CERTAIN DEGREE. I SUPPOSE
IKARIS-MAKKARI HAS INFORMED ME THAT THERE ARE RELATIVELY FEW OF US LEFT UPON GAEA


"EARTH"-- OUR PLANET IS NOW CALLED "EARTH" AND YES MOST OF OUR BRETHREN HAVE DEPARTED, CHOOSING, INSTEAD, A FUTURE AMONG THE STARS.
YET SOMEHOW-DESPITE THIS GREAT SCHISM YOU HAVE KEPT YOUR REGAL BEARING
WHILE MANAGING TO KEEP OUR RACE UNITED IN AN OLYMPIA THAT HAS CLEARLY FLOURISHED SINCE LAST I ROAMED THE WORLD
YOUR WORDS ARE NOT WITHOUT MERIT
TODAY'S EVENTS WERE PROFOUND INDEED BUT PUT YOUR MIND AT EASE IF YOU ARE TROUBLED BY THE IDEA THAT I--YOUR ELDER-
--MIGHT EXPECT YOU TO RELINQUISH THE MANTLE I WOULD ENTERTAIN NO SUCH NOTION WHEN THE FATE OF OUR PEOPLE ALREADY RESTS IN YOUR CAPABLE HANDS
ALL THIS TIME I BELIEVED YOU WERE LOST FOR ALL ETERNITY--
--THAT YOU SACRIFICED YOURSELF IN A CATACLYSMIC BATTLE MILLENNIA PAST, FATHER--
--THAT YOU, UNLIKE MOST OF OUR KIND HAD SOMEHOW PERISHED
WHAT WAS IT LIKE, VIRAKO? HOW DID IT FEEL TO "DIE"?


I RECALL THE CONFLICT A BLINDING WHITE LIGHT... AND THEN--


PARDON MY INTRUSION BUT RANSAK HAS MIRACULOUSLY RECOVERED-- A RESULT OF THE GENETIC MUTATION UNIQUE TO HIS DNA SEQUENCE
HE IS REQUESTING AN AUDIENCE
CAN'T IT WAIT THENA?
I THINK NOT

WHAT ARE YOU *SAYING*, FRIEND RANSAK?

THE CITY OF TOADS HAS FALLEN UNDER *NUCLEAR ATTACK* BY HUMANKIND, FRIEND KARIS.

NOT SINCE THE *JUDGMENT* OF THE SECOND HOST OF CELESTIALS--

--HAVE WEAPONS OF SUCH *MAGNITUDE* BEEN BROUGHT TO BEAR AGAINST THE DEVIANTS.

NOT SINCE THE TERRIBLE POWER THAT SHOOK THE WORLD WHEN LEMURIA ORIGINALLY PLUNGED BENEATH THE WAVES.

I SURMISE THE RADIATION'S *TOXICITY* MUTATED RANSAK BOTH *MENTALLY* AND *PHYSICALLY*--

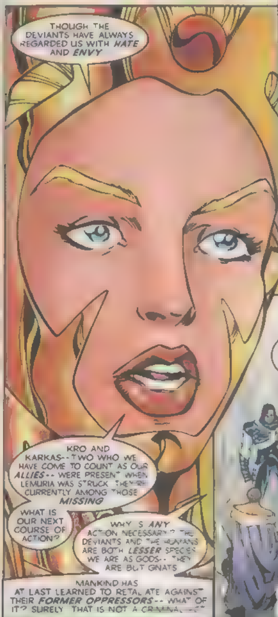
--SOMEHOW REVERTING HIM TO A MORE *PRIMITIVE* STATE.

I ALSO STRONGLY SUSPECT THE FALLOUT TO BE A KEY FACTOR IN THE COALESCENCE OF VIRAKO'S

OF COURSE. COULD THIS HAVE HAD SIMILAR EFFECTS ON OTHER ETERNALS PREVIOUSLY BELIEVED TO BE "DEAD"?

WITHOUT DOUBT.

HAVE YOU LISTENED TO A WORD I'VE SAID? THERE IS A *WAR* RAGING AROUND US-- INNOCENTS ARE *DYING!* WE MUST ACT IMMEDIATELY.

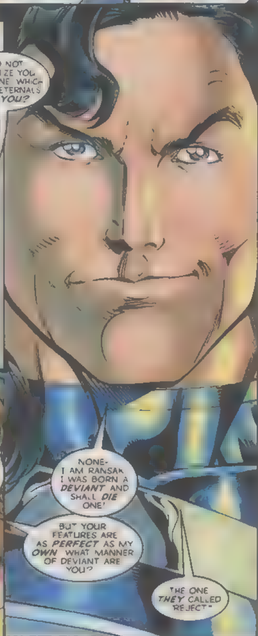

THOUGH THE DEVIANTS HAVE ALWAYS REGARDED US WITH *HATE* AND *ENVY*

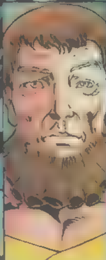

BETTER SPENT ATTENDING TO THE NEEDS OF THESE *LOST ETERNALS* PHASTOS SPEAKS OF
PARDON YOUR EXCELLENCY BUT THE MORTALS HAVE *ADVANCED* NOW TO A LEVEL WHERE THEY CAN EFFORTLESSLY UNLEASH THE DESTRUCTIVE FORCES OF THE ATOM


AND WHAT OF KARKAS?
DON'T YOU HAVE ANY *LOYALTY* TO HIM? HASN'T HE *EARNED* IT?

KRO AND KARKAS--TWO WHO WE HAVE COME TO COUNT AS OUR *ALLIES*--WERE PRESENT WHEN LEMURIA WAS STRUCK. THEY'RE CURRENTLY AMONG THOSE *MISSING*
WHAT IS OUR NEXT COURSE OF ACTION?
WHY IS *ANY* ACTION NECESSARY? THE DEVIANTS AND THE HUMANS ARE BOTH *LESSER* SPECIES. WE ARE AS GODS--THEY ARE BUT GNATS
MANKIND HAS AT LAST LEARNED TO RETALIATE AGAINST THEIR *FORMER OPPRESSORS*--WHAT OF IT? SURELY THAT IS NOT A CRIMINAL ACT


I DO NOT RECOGNIZE YOU BRASH ONE. WHICH OF THE ETERNALS ARE *YOU?*




NONE--I AM RANSAK. I WAS BORN A *DEVIANT* AND SHALL *DIE* ONE!
BUT YOUR FEATURES ARE AS *PERFECT* AS MY *OWN*. WHAT MANNER OF DEVIANT ARE YOU?
THE ONE *THEY* CALLED REJECT.

BE THAT AS IT MAY, DEVIANT, YOUR WORDS IMPRESS ME NOT. ETERNALS HAVE *NEVER* CONCERNED THEMSELVES WITH THE AFFAIRS OF MORT--

WAIT, FATHER THESE ARE [illegible] MATTERS AND SHOULD NOT BE *DISMISSED* SO CASUA...

AS THENA TOLD YOU TIMES HAVE INDEED *CHANGED*, AND WE NO LONGER ISOLATE OURSELVES AS BEFORE

SURELY YOU ARE NOT SWAYED BY THE WORDS OF THIS *RECKLESS* DEVIANT, IKARIS!

HIS DEMEANOR CLEARLY ILLUSTRATES THE BLOODTHIRSTY NATURE OF HIS RACE! HUMANS AND DEVIANTS ARE SO UNLIKE US-- SO

INSIGNIFICANT

FATHER, HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT? BUT FOR THIS CONFLICT BETWEEN THESE SO-CALLED "LESSER" SPECIES, YOU WOULD NOT BE AMONG US THIS DAY

WE ARE *ALREADY* INVOLVED, WHETHER IT BE FOR GOOD OR ILL

[illegible] I WAS TOO *QUICK* IN JUDGING THE EFFICACY OF YOUR LEADERSHIP, KARIS. PERHAPS I WAS SIMPLY *BLINDED*--

--BY A FATHER'S *PRIDE*

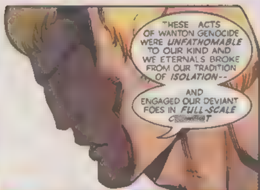
[illegible] EVERYTHING THAT MAKES US WHAT WE ARE-- EVERYTHING THAT [illegible] *US*...

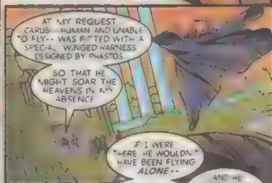
FROM *THEM*

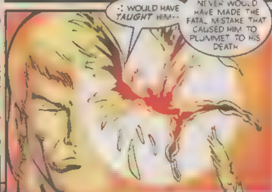
INDEED, THE TIMES HAVE *GREATLY* CHANGED

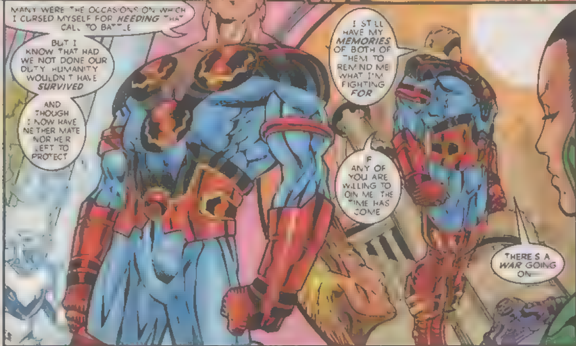
AND IT SHALL TAKE SOME TIME TO *PONDER* WHAT HAS BECOME OF OUR IMMORTAL HERITAGE


ONCE I WAS WED TO A MORTAL-- A MAIDEN OF GREAT BEAUTY AND WISDOM BEYOND HER YEARS. SHE BORE ME A SON. ICARUS WAS HIS NAME.
IT WAS A PERIOD OF GREAT HAPPINESS AND CONTENTMENT UNTIL THE DEVIANTS SWEPT ACROSS THE CONTINENTS
--INTENT ON WIPING ALL HOMO SAPIENS OUT OF EXISTENCE.

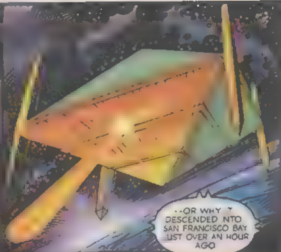

THESE ACTS OF WANTON GENOCIDE WERE UNFATHOMABLE TO OUR KIND AND WE ETERNALS BROKE FROM OUR TRADITION OF ISOLATION--
AND ENGAGED OUR DEVIANT FOES IN FULL-SCALE COMBAT.

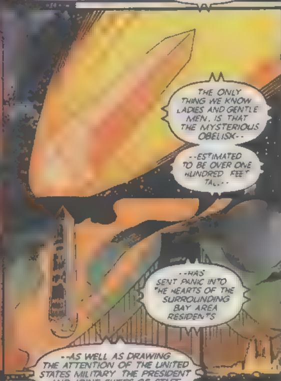

AT MY REQUEST ICARUS-- HUMAN AND UNABLE TO FLY-- WAS FITTED WITH A SPECIAL WINGED HARNESS DESIGNED BY PHASTOS.
SO THAT HE MIGHT SOAR THE HEAVENS IN MY ABSENCE.

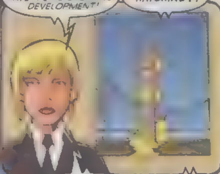

IF I WERE THERE HE WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN FLYING ALONE--
--I WOULD HAVE TAUGHT HIM--
AND HE NEVER WOULD HAVE MADE THE FATAL MISTAKE THAT CAUSED HIM TO PLUMMET TO HIS DEATH.


MANY WERE THE OCCASIONS ON WHICH I CURSED MYSELF FOR HEEDING THAT CALL TO BATTLE.
BUT I KNOW THAT HAD WE NOT DONE OUR DUTY, HUMANITY WOULDN'T HAVE SURVIVED.
AND THOUGH I NOW HAVE NEITHER MATE NOR HEIR LEFT TO PROTECT
I STILL HAVE MY MEMORIES OF BOTH OF THEM TO REMIND ME WHAT I'M FIGHTING FOR.
IF ANY OF YOU ARE WILLING TO JOIN ME, THE TIME HAS COME.
THERE'S A WAR GOING ON.

NO ONE'S SURE WHO BUILT
WHERE CAME FROM







THEY'RE CLEARLY A GROUP OF COSTUMED ADVENTURERS BUT ONE WE'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE!
BE A *WEAPON* CREATED BY THE DEVIANTS IN RESPONSE TO ATTACKS ON LEMURIA?!
HARD TO TELL-- ITS MARKINGS APPEAR TO BE ANCIENT *EGYPTIAN*
IMPOSSIBLE
TO HIM?
WHILE HE'S HEADING TOWARD THAT BRIDGE
I AM *SORRY* MONSTROUS ONE. BUT THERE IS NO OTHER WAY
AURELLE--
SOME KIND OF LEVIATHAN?!
NO KARKAS
BACK OFF, BIG RED!
OH NO! I MANAGED TO TEMPORARILY BLIND KARKAS BUT RANSAK'S BEEN *THROWN* FROM HIS SHOULDERS!

--I HAVE HIM!

REMEMBER ETERNALS-- KARKAS WAS ONCE A FRIEND AND TRUSTED ALLY.

HE'S *UNABLE* TO CONTROL HIS BEHAVIOR MUCH LIKE RANSAK EARLIER. OUR PRIMARY FOCUS SHOULD BE TO DISSUADE HIM FROM HEADING FURTHER INLAND--

--WITHOUT CAUSING HIM UNDUE HARM.

AS YOU WISH, IKARIS. AND WHAT BETTER WAY TO DO SO--

--THAN BY TAKING MENTAL CONTROL OF HI--

"PSYKOS-- WAIT!!"

AAAARRRGH!!!

UNNH!

PULL UP! PULL UP! [redacted] THIS WAY!!

MAN, THAT WAS WAAAAAY TOO CLOSE!

WE GET THAT ON TAPE?

SOVEREIGN-- THE CREATURE'S PSYCHE - SO IMPENETRABLE I THINK IT'S *ALREADY* UNDER SOME FORM OF MENTAL DOMINATION.

YOUR [redacted] NEARLY COST INNOCENT LIVES, PSYKOS! THERE'S NO TIME FOR SUCH *GRAND-STANDING*. WE MUST STRIKE--

--IN *TANDEM*!

[redacted] GENTLEMEN, I DON'T BELIEVE WHAT I'M WITNESSING-- IT LOOKS LIKE THIS MYSTERIOUS TEAM OF HEROIC DEFENDERS ARE [redacted] FROM THEIR EYES DOWN AT THE BAY--

--AND SUPER-HEATING ITS COASTAL WATERS!

THE TEMPERATURES SEEM TO BE DETERRING THE HORRENDOUS "RED GIANT" FROM APPROACHING THE CITY.


KARKAS-- WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM, IKARIS? WE HAVE NOT DONE HIM ANY DAMAGE--
--YET HE APPEARS TO BE IN
PAIN!
HE IS UNDER THE CONTROL OF SOME OUTSIDE FORCE, PHASTOS-- CAN YOU DO SOMETHING?
I CAN TRY
WHAT ARE YOU ATTEMPTING?
TO SCAN KARKAS' MUTATED FORM FOR SIGNS OF AN ARTIFICIAL IMPLANT, CEYOTE-- SUCH A MECHANISM COULD BE THE CAUSE OF HIS RAMPAGE!
THEN ALLOW ME--

--TO PROVIDE THE BEAST WITH [illegible] DISTRACTION--

WHICH MY TOTEMIC *"ANI-MATES"* CAN EASILY PROVIDE!

SOVEREIGN-- MY SENSORS HAVE LOCATED A CONTROLLING DEVICE AT THE BASE OF [illegible]

TO REMOVE IT WOULD SURELY KILL THE BEAST. HOWEVER I DO HAVE A DEFINITE LOCK ON THE CONTROL SIGNAL'S POINT OF *ORIGIN*-- [illegible]

THOUGH *CLOAKED* FROM DETECTION BY THE EYES OF MORTAL MAN-- I SEE IT.

KEEP KARKAS OCCUPIED

I'LL BE BACK

BY ZURAS'S BEARD. I'VE NEVER SEEN THE LIKES OF THIS!
SOME KIND OF ORBITAL PLATFORM MILES LONG-- BUT BY WHOSE DESIGN?
PANEL ON ITS HULL-- SLIDING BACK--
ALLOWING ME ENTRANCE TO ITS INTERIOR--
--WHICH BEARS THE SAME EGYPTIAN MOTIF WITHIN AS WITHOUT.
IT'S AS THOUGH I'M BEING WELCO-- WHA?!



IKARIS-- "KING OF THE AMORTALS"-- TO WHAT DO I OWE THIS DISPLEASURE?
EN SABAH NUR!
I SHOULD HAVE RECOGNIZED YOUR HANDIWORK SOONER--
--AND WOULD HAVE, IF NOT FOR THE MISTAKEN BELIEF THAT YOU'D PERISHED DURING OUR LAST ENCOUNTER
THE CENTURIES HAVE NOT TARNISHED YOUR EGO, ETERNAL. BUT, PLEASE, ADDRESS ME BY THE NAME THAT ALL HUMANKIND WILL SOON WHISPER IN FEAR--
--APOCALYPSE!
FAR GREATER THAN THE MISSHAPEN DEVIANT BEHEMOTH ENGAGING THE REST OF YOUR BREED BELOW
YOU RECKON WITH THE PINNACLE-- THE NEXT STAGE-- IN MANKIND'S EVOLUTION--
THE FIRST AND FOREMOST OF ALL THE HOMO
THIS SKIRMISH BETWEEN HOMO SAPIENS AND HOMO DESCENDUS IS MERELY A PORTENT OF THE END TIMES-- THE MEREST GLIMPSE OF THINGS TO COME
THIS IS THE CAUSE OF THE RECENT HORRORS THE EARTH HAS BEEN FORCED TO DEAL WITH-- AND ALL THE RECENT UPHEAVALS IN MY OWN LIFE AS WELL
IT WAS YOU FROM THE VERY BEGINNING, WASN'T IT, MUTANT? YOU WERE THE ONE WHO ENGINEERED THE ATTACK ON THE DEVIANT CITY--
--NOT THE HUMANS
BUT BY ALL THAT IS SACRED, WHY?!?
APPARENTLY THE AGES HAVE ONLY SERVED TO TWIST YOU EVEN FURTHER, NUR
I MERELY PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF EVOLUTION THROUGH CONFLICT-- AS I HAVE FOR MILLENNIA PAST, AS I WILL FOR MILLENNIA TO COME
YOU CANNOT STAVE OFF THE INEVITABLE GENETIC CLEANSING NECESSARY TO REMOVE THE WEAK WHO STAND IN THE WAY OF THE STRONG
--YOUR INSISTENCE ON TOYING WITH THE DESTINIES OF BEINGS YOU DEEM TO BE INFERIOR?
PATHETIC
YOU WANT TO CULL THE WEAK FROM THE STRONG? LET'S BEGIN RIGHT HERE-- RIGHT NOW--



..UST YOU AND ME!
AS YOU WISH.
BY THE WAY, THAT MISSHAPEN DEVIANT BEHEMOTH YOU REFERRED TO HAPPENS TO BE MY FRIEND, AND I DEMAND THAT YOU FREE HIM IMMEDIATELY!
NEVER, IMBECILE! OF ALL THE RADIATION-AFFLICTED DEVIANTS SELECTED FOR "STUDY"--
--IT WAS THAT SELFSAME ABERRATION WHO PROVED TO BE MOST SAVAGELY EFFICIENT IN COMBAT WITH HIS FELLOW
FWAMM
I MERELY ADVANCED HIM TO THE NEXT LEVEL. HE IS NOW THE PERFECT BIOLOGICAL ENGINE OF DESTRUCTION AND HE WILL NOT BE SURRENDERED.
YOU CANNOT STOP ME, ETERNAL-- YOU CANNOT STOP US. MUTANTS ARE DESTINED TO INHERIT THE PLANET BELOW, AND THERE IS PRECIOUS LITTLE YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT US FROM CLAIMING THAT
WE'LL FIND A WAY! NO MATTER THE COST, WE WILL PROTECT THE EARTH FROM YOU AND YOUR KIND!
REALLY?
THEN WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH GRANTED SOVEREIGNTY OF AN ENTIRE NATION TO THE MISGUIDED MUTANT MAGNETO?
OFF
SACRED VOW OF NON-INTERFERENCE?
TO
IS NOTHING MORE THAN AN ARROGANT CHILD-- HE WILL POSE NO LASTING THREAT. HE IS MORTAL. HIS DAYS ARE NUMBERED--

AND I INTEND TO SEE THAT YOURS ARE *TOO!*

I SWEAR, IN MY FATHER'S NAME, NO MATTER WHAT *SADISTIC* SCHEME YOU'VE SET IN MOTION BETWEEN HUMAN AND DEVIANT-- WE ETERNALS SHALL PUT AN *END* TO IT!

EXCELLENT. YOU HAVE *PERFORMED* TO PERFECTION-- PLAYING OUT YOUR *ROLE* PRECISELY AS I FORESAW IT FROM THE *ONSET.*

THE BRILLIANCE OF MY PLAN IS THAT YOU NEVER *SUSPECTED* YOU WERE DOING PRECISELY WHAT I *WANTED* OF YOU ALL ALONG.

AAARRRGH!!

SOON EARTH'S *TWELVE* MOST POWERFUL MUTANTS SHALL BE GATHERED IN FULFILLMENT OF THE *ANCIENT PROPHECIES,* AND AT THAT MOMENT--

THE *AGE OF APOCALYPSE* SHALL BE USHERED IN. AND ALL THE WHILE YOU HAVE BEEN KEPT BUSY PLAYING *PEACEMAKER,* MY PLAN HAS BEEN ALLOWED TO PROCEED *WITHOUT* INTERFERENCE.

I MUST ADMIT THE TEMPTATION TO PROVE AN ETERNAL CAN *DIE* IS GREAT INDEED--BUT IF I WERE TO *KILL* YOU, WHO WOULD LET YOUR PEOPLE *KNOW* WHAT IT MEANS TO *OPPOSE* ME?

SHUT UP!

YOU STILL HAVEN'T LEARNED HOW *DIFFICULT* IT IS TO STRIKE AN OPPONENT WHO IS CAPABLE OF CONTROLLING *EVERY MOLECULE* WITHIN HIS BODY.


BOOM
I WAS RIGHT--DESTROYING A SECTION OF EN SABAH NUR'S *PYRAMID-FORTRESS*--
--IS CAUSING AN *EXPLOSIVE DECOMPRESSION* THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE STRUCTURE!
WE'RE BEING SUCKED INTO--
--SPACE!


HE'S UNSTOPPABLE!


NO-- NO, HE IS NOT.
YOU WERE PRESENT WHEN KARKAS AND I FIRST MET, THENA. I DEFEATED HIM IN THE DEVIANTS' SAVAGE ARENA ON THAT OCCASION.
I KNEW HIS WEAKNESS THEN--


--AND SHALL EXPLOIT IT HERE, AGAIN, TODAY!
FORGIVE ME, FRIEND...


FRZZAKKT




RAAAAARGH!


THAT SCREAM-- SO HORRIBLE--!


RANSAK HAS IMBEDDED HIS ENERGY-LANCE--
"--DIRECTLY INTO KARKAS' SPINAL COLUMN!"
NOW YOU MUST ALL FOCUS ON THE LANCE... AND--


"--FIRE!"


SK
BOOM


SPLOOSH


NOW WHAT?
SOME KIND OF MASSIVE FIRE-BALL?!!


SPLOOSH


NO-- IT'S IKARIS!
Unnngh...

KARKAS HAS BEEN SWEPT OUT TO SEA-- AND YOU CLAIM OUR ANCIENT NEMESIS **EN SABAH NUR** IS NOT ONLY **RESPONSIBLE** FOR CAUSING HIS **RAMPAGE**, BUT THE **ATTACK** ON SUNKEN LEMURIA AS WELL?

WHAT **NEXT**, ETERNALS? MY HOMELAND IS IN RUINS, AND NOW YOU HAVE **SPLIT** FROM YOUR OLYMPIAN KINSMEN.

FIRST, WE ALLAY THE **FEARS** OF THESE MORTALS.

THEN WE MUST CONSIDER THE REALITY THAT WE ARE STILL **NEEDED** HERE.

KTV

PERHAPS IT'S TIME FOR OUR MORTAL COUSINS TO BECOME **AWARE** OF OUR PRESENCE AMONG THEM...

WHOA-- LIKE, **CHILL**, IKE! DO YOU WANT THEM TO STRING US UP LIKE THEY ALREADY WANT TO DO WITH ALL THE **MUTANTS??**

HUMANITY WOULD TOTALLY FREAK IF THEY KNEW A RACE OF **SUPER-POWERED IMMORTALS** HAS BEEN LIVING AMONG THEM **ALL ALONG!**

BESIDES, I HAVE A **BETTER** IDEA.

WHY DON'T I EXPLAIN ON THE WAY--

"--TO MEET THE **PRESS?**"

HERE THEY COME-- THE ONES WHO **SAVED** THE CITY!

KTV

SOVEREIGN! **SOVEREIGN!** THAT'S THE NAME YOU ANSWER TO, ISN'T IT, SIR?

WHY... YES.

AND WHO ARE YOUR TEAMMATES?

"MEET **CORONA**--

"**CEASEFIRE**--

"**TOMORROW HAWK**--

"--**PSYCHE**--

"--**SPARX**--

"--**CHI DEMON**--

"--**WARHEAD**--

"--AND **MESMER**--"


--HUMANITY'S LATEST LINE OF DEFENSE--
THE NEW BREED
JUST HOW LONG HAS YOUR TEAM BEEN AROUND, SOVEREIGN?
FOR AGES...
SET UP AN INTEROFFICE MEETING FOR NOON. A NEW SET OF... PLAYERS HAVE MADE THE SCENE.
AS , IF IN CONTRAST TO THE HIDEOUS SPECIES WE DISCOVERED A WEEK AGO, THEY SEEM TO BE PERFECT SPECIMENS.
THEIR SUDDEN APPEARANCE AMONG US IS NO COINCIDENCE. OF THAT, I AM QUITE CERTAIN.
WE'LL HAVE TO MAINTAIN A VERY CLOSE WATCH, WON'T WE?
THE END?